

IOWA BIRD LIFE

IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION





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The Iowa Ornithologists' Union, founded in 1923, encourages interest in the identification, study, and protection of birds in Iowa and seeks to unite those who have these interests in common. Iowa Bird Life and IOU News are quarterly publications of the Union.

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Least Terns nesting in southwestern Iowa

Ryan R. Ubias, Coady W. Lundy, and Stephen J. Dinsmore

The Least Tern is a federally endangered species (Thompson et al. 1997) that is a rare migrant and breeding bird in Iowa (Kent and Dinsmore 1996). The last nesting colony at a natural, sandbar site was at DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge in Harrison County, where the species nested until 1973 (Dinsmore et al. 1984). In 1984 a small colony was discovered at the MidAmerican Energy power plant settling ponds south of Council Bluffs in Pottawattamie County where they have nested in most subsequent years (Dinsmore et al. 1999, 2004). Smaller numbers have nested irregularly since 1986 at a similar power plant at Sioux City in Woodbury County (Dinsmore et al. 1999, 2004). At the latter two sites the birds nest on exposed fly-ash, which is a byproduct of coal burning and is deposited at settling ponds where it remains vegetation-free because of frequent human disturbance and the basic chemical nature of the substrate.

On 9 July 2014 while conducting bird point count surveys as part of Iowa's Multiple Species Inventory and Monitoring (MSIM) program Ubias found three territorial Least Terns at Nottleman Island in Mills County (Figure 1). The birds were frequenting a large



Figure 1. Least Tern nesting habitat, Nottleman I, Mills, 16 July 2014. Photograph by Ryan R. Ubias, Houston, TX.



Figure 2. Least Tern chick, Nottleman I, Mills, 30 July 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

sand dune area adjacent to the Missouri River that was created by the 2011 Missouri River flood. A visit on 15 July revealed that 6 adults were present and they were still territorial. After consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (because this is a federally protected species) Ubias and Lundy returned to the site on 16 July and counted 8 adult Least Terns and found three nests with eggs. On 20 July Ubias found at least 7 territorial adult Least Terns at Frazer's Bend in Fremont County at a site that had been under water until early July. Unlike Nottleman Island these birds were frequenting a large area of exposed sandy mud that was >1 km from the Missouri River.

The three of us visited both sites on 30 July to gather additional information about the nesting activity. At Nottleman Island we saw 3 adults and found two nests, one with one egg and the other with a 1-week-old chick (Figure 2). At Frazer's Bend we found a nest with 2 eggs at the exact location where Ubias noted terns on 20 July. Because of the extensive habitat at this site we expanded our search effort and found a second nest with three eggs approximately 800 m south of the first nest (Figure 3). In this general area we saw 5 adult Least Terns, including a courting pair. Some nearby drying wetlands held 2 adult and 4 juvenile Least Terns that we believed were migrants. We then moved to a second site at Frazer's, closer to the Missouri River, and found a small colony that contained 5 adult Least Terns, two nests with 2 eggs each, and evidence that two of the adults were feeding recently hatched chicks. Dinsmore revisited Frazer's Bend on 5 August with Kevin T. Murphy and counted 8 adults, 3 nests with eggs, and evidence of adults feeding chicks at the colony

nearest the Missouri River. A visit to both sites on 11 August found no terns and we assume that Nottleman Island may have fledged one chick while at Frazer's Bend there was probably no productivity.

These records represent the first new nesting locales for Least Terns in Iowa since 1984, and are also the first time this species has nested away from the two power plants since 1973 (Dinsmore et al. 1984), except for an unsuccessful nesting attempt

in 2006 at Saylorville Reservoir (Dinsmore 2006). Careful management of sites with sandy soils on or adjacent to the Missouri River might produce more nesting records of this rare Iowa breeding bird.



Figure 3. Adult Least Tern on nest, Frazer's Bend WA, Fremont, 30 July 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

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Field Reports—Summer 2014

James J. Dinsmore



James J. Dinsmore

It was a somewhat typical summer without the major flooding or drought of some recent years. Iowa had average temperatures but exceptionally wet weather in June and was very cool with average rainfall in July. Two Accidental and two Casual species were found, and one new nesting species, Horned Grebe, was added to Iowa's list.

WEATHER

Temperatures in June averaged 70.3 degrees, 0.6 degrees above normal and the 55th warmest June in 141 years of records. Other than during the second week of the month, temperatures were above normal most days and all but one day in the last half of June. Only 20 percent of the reporting stations had temperatures in the 90s with the high of 94 degrees on 20 June in Sidney. The lowest temperature was 38

degrees on 20 June at Battle Creek, the lowest temperature so late in the season since 1992.

Rainfall in June averaged 9.94 inches, the third wettest June on record and Iowa's fourth wettest month in 141 years. Only July 1993 (10.50 inches), June 2010 (10.39 inches), and June 1947 (10.33 inches) had more precipitation. Heavy rainfall started on 1 June with heavy rain reported in southeastern and northwestern Iowa where Cherokee received more than 4 inches. On 3 June, heavy rain fell on all except northeastern Iowa with Lamoni receiving more than 5 inches. Heavy rainfall resumed in mid-June, first in northwestern Iowa where the Rock and Big Sioux river watersheds started flooding and then extending to eastern Iowa where Muscatine received more than 6 inches on 30 June. Monthly totals ranged from 6 inches at Sidney to 17 inches at Cherokee. All-time monthly record totals were set at nine reporting stations, all in northwestern Iowa.

July temperatures averaged 69.0 degrees, 4.6 degrees below normal and the fifth coolest July on record. Cool temperatures prevailed throughout the month with only six days averaging warmer than normal and overnight lows in the 40s as frequent as highs in the 90s. The high temperature was 102 degrees at Sibley on 25 July, the only temperature above 97 degrees. Burlington failed to reach 90 degrees by the end of July, a first for records that date back to 1897. The lowest temperature was 44 degrees at Little Sioux and Stanley on 16 July.

Rainfall in July averaged 3.31 inches, 1.19 inches below normal and the 60th driest July in 142 years of records. However, precipitation this year was greater than in either

2013 or 2012. Flooding from the heavy rains of late June continued in some parts of Iowa. The only major rainfall events with a statewide average of more than half an inch of rain were on 5–6, 11–12, and 24–25 July, and rainfall totals were much below normal in parts of northern and southwestern Iowa. Atlantic had only 0.71 inches of rain while Montezuma, with 10.21 inches, had the most. There were few severe weather events but eight small tornadoes hit central Iowa on 6 July.

BIRDS OF SUMMER

Habitat Conditions

As is typical of these reports, most of the birds were found on public lands. The reasons for that are well known to birders: those lands often have habitat that is attractive to many bird species and birders have good access to that land. Still, most of Iowa is privately owned and that land, although dominated by agriculture, roads, homes, and commercial areas, still provides much good habitat for many bird species. For some years I have written about various government programs that make some of that land more attractive to wildlife. Since its inception in the mid-1980s, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has been a prime example of this as it allowed landowners to convert some of their land to more natural habitat and get government support for doing so. At its peak in 1995, Iowa had about 2.2 million acres in CRP which was especially beneficial to a variety of grassland birds. Since then, support for CRP has steadily decreased and as of 2013, Iowa had about 1.5 million acres in CRP, roughly a 30% decrease. A new farm bill was passed by Congress early in 2014 but it called for further reductions in CRP and Iowa undoubtedly will continue to have fewer acres in the program. Over those same years, there have also been other changes in land use in Iowa. Hay land decreased from 1.7 million acres to about 1.17 million acres and decreases have occurred on other similar lands as well. DNR biologists have estimated that habitat suitable for pheasants has decreased from 4.1 million acres in 1995 to 2.8 million acres in 2013. In general, those are the same lands where we typically find meadowlarks, Dickcissels, Grasshopper Sparrows, and other grassland species.

As expected, the emerald ash borer continues to spread across Iowa with reports from more than 10 counties. Presumably, within a few years it will be found statewide and ash trees will begin to disappear from both urban areas and our forested regions. It seems likely that, short of some effective control method for this pest, in a few decades our yards, parks, and forests will be without ash trees, much as American elm disappeared several decades ago.

In June the Wildlife Diversity Program of the Iowa DNR dedicated its 19th Bird Conservation Area. This one, the Thousand Acre BCA, is centered on three units of Stephens State Forest in Lucas, Monroe, and Marion counties in south-central Iowa and covers approximately 50,000 acres. The area includes state forest land, other public lands, and adjacent private lands. Woodlands and grasslands each cover about 40% of the BCA and provide habitat for bird species such as American Woodcock, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Wood Thrush, Kentucky Warbler, Henslow's Sparrow, and Bobolink. This is the fourth BCA that is centered on Iowa's state forests.

Breeding Species

The big news of the summer was Iowa's first report of nesting by Horned Grebes. With

the addition of American Avocet and Black-necked Stilt last year, this is the 212th species to be documented as nesting in Iowa. A second major discovery was finding Least Terns, a federally listed Endangered species, nesting at two sites in southwestern Iowa.

Among other species, Ospreys and Peregrine Falcons both had reasonable nesting success, and both added a few new nest sites. Bald Eagles continued to do well as they approach having at least one nest in every Iowa county. Sandhill Cranes continued their reoccupation of Iowa with about a quarter of the counties having evidence of reproductive activity. Strangely, cranes still have not made any real inroad into the pothole region of northwestern Iowa which has great potential as nesting habitat. At the Clinton spoil islands, American White Pelicans, Double-crested Cormorants, and Great Egrets all seemed to have had good nesting success. A few Cattle Egret nests were found there for the fourth time. Other interesting finds among nesting birds were one Canvasback and two Redhead broods, continued nesting by Mississippi Kites in Ottumwa, Common Gallinule broods at two sites, continued presence of Least Terns at Council Bluffs but no mention of nesting Piping Plovers, and nesting Pine Warblers in Lee County for at least the third time. Ring-billed Gulls were unsuccessful at their Spirit Lake colony due to an untimely hail storm. For almost certainly the first time ever, five grebe species were found at one site, Eagle Lake in Hancock County, during summer.

Range Changes

Several species continued to show evidence of range expansion in Iowa. Blue Grosbeaks, long confined to western Iowa, continued to appear in counties east of that historic range as well as making minor movement north from their tiny toehold in southeastern Iowa. For the fifth summer in the past six, a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher was found in Iowa. This species seems to be moving north and east and may start nesting in Iowa. Eurasian Tree Sparrows continued their steady advance north and west in Iowa. The species has now been found in a quarter of Iowa's counties, and it seems likely that it will continue to expand its range. Eastern Meadowlarks were found in two counties in far northwestern Iowa, an area of Iowa that long seemed to be the exclusive range of Western Meadowlarks. Were these just a few isolated birds or is the "boundary" between the two meadowlark species shifting west? Finally, with three records of Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks this summer and a fourth in late May (Harms 2014), it appears that this wandering species is becoming a more regular part of our avifauna.

Migrants

More than the usual number of late northbound migrants were found this past June. These included lingering groups of Redheads and Ruddy Ducks, at least 11 species of migrant shorebirds including Black-bellied Plover, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit, and Dunlin, late Franklin's Gulls and Black Terns, a few each of Olive-sided and three species of *Empidonax* flycatchers, and single Tennessee, Blackburnian, and Blackpoll warblers. Spring migration clearly doesn't end on 31 May. Among southbound birds, there was evidence of mid- or late July movement of Blue-winged Teal, American White Pelicans, at least 15 species of shorebirds, Bonaparte's and Franklin's gulls, and Caspian Terns. Among passerines, a single Olive-sided Flycatcher and Northern Waterthrush were both very early. And the

presence of Sedge Wrens in southern Iowa in late July suggests a southward movement by that species.

Unusual Species

This was a good summer for rarities with two Accidental (Roseate Spoonbill, Lark Bunting) and two Casual (King Rail, Ruff) species seen this summer. Other unusual species that were found were Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Ross's Goose, American Black Duck, Common Goldeneye, Red-breasted Merganser, Horned Grebe, Red-necked Grebe, Eared Grebe, Western Grebe, Snowy Egret, White-faced Ibis, Swainson's Hawk, Black-necked Stilt, Hudsonian Godwit, Marbled Godwit, Laughing Gull, Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, Northern Waterthrush, Black-and-white Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, and Pine Warbler.

SPECIES DATA

All CAPS = Accidental or Casual species, * = documented. County names are in italics. Full names of contributors are at the end of the article. Abbreviations used: **ad** = adult, **alt** = alternate (plumage), **A** = area, **BCA** = bird conservation area, **F** = forest, **juv** = juvenile, **L** = lake, **M** = marsh, **m.ob.** = many observers, **NM** = national monument, **P** = park, **ph** = photo, **R** = river, **RA** = recreation area, **Res** = reservoir, **se half** = diagonal se half, **Sl** = slough, **SP** = state park, **WPA** = waterfowl production area, **WA** = wildlife area, **yg** = young.

Key to maps: shading = species reported in county. In most cases, the species was probably nesting in the county although evidence was presented only in a few cases.

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: All: one 2 Jun at Crow Creek WA *Scott* (*Susa Stonedahl-ph), 2 on 28 Jun near Sloan Woodbury (GLV-ph), and one 3 Jul at Green Island WA *Jackson* (*Susan Nixon-ph).

Greater White-fronted Goose: All: singles 6 Jun at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB), 7 Jun at New L Woodbury (GLV), 11 Jun at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), 7 Jul at Green Island WA *Jackson* (JF), and 27 Jul at Rock Creek SP *Jasper* (AB).

Snow Goose: All: 4 on 2, 28 Jun at Colo *Story* (SJD), one 10, 18 Jun at Lakin Sl *Guthrie* (MSIM), 2 on 12 Jun at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), 2 on 12 Jun at Dairy Pond Woodbury (GLV), one 6 Jul at Dunbar Sl *Guthrie* (SJD), and 2 on 30 Jul in *Union* (SJD).

Ross's Goose: The only report was one 2 Jun at Ames *Story* (SJD).

Trumpeter Swan: Trumpeter Swans

continue to do well with most nesting birds in N Iowa. Earlier this year, 8 swans were released, 4 each at L *Icaria Adams* and Summit L *Union* in S Iowa (DNR).

Gadwall: All: one 1 Jun at Spring Run WA *Dickinson* (MHB), 2 on 4 Jun at Errington M *Polk* (RLC), 3 on 12 Jul at Coulter M *Franklin*, (SJD), and one 17 Jul at Harrier M *Boone* (MSIM).

American Wigeon: A male 14 Jun at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) was the only report.

American Black Duck: One 12 Jul near Coulter *Franklin* (SJD-ph) was the first summer record since 2004.

Blue-winged Teal: Most reports were from its usual breeding range in N Iowa. The 12 on 30 Jul near Ainsworth *Washing-ton* (WWH) were probably early migrants.

Northern Shoveler: All: 4 on 13 Jun at Ocheyedan WA *Clay* (MSIM), one 24

braska were released in Iowa. Two females from that release successfully hatched clutches on the Kellerton WA *Ringgold* and two additional nests were found. At least eight broods were seen in the area, the most breeding success reported in several years (SSh).

Common Loon: All: 4 on 4 Jun at Spirit L *Dickinson* (SJD), one 17 Jun at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), 2 (basic) on 3 Jul at West Okoboji L *Dickinson* (Marilyn Conover *fide* LAS), one 15 Jul at Pleasant Creek RA Linn (Gerald Teig), and one 24 Jul at Otter Creek M *Tama* (MSIM).

Pied-billed Grebe: Two broods at Green Island WA *Jackson* (JF), a brood at Cone M *Louisa* (JF), and six nests at Hendrickson M *Story* (SJD) were all somewhat south of where this species typically nests. Broods were especially numerous at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD).

Horned Grebe: All: A pair at a nest 4 Jun at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD) and an ad and 2 half-grown yg there 12 Jul (SJD) provided Iowa with its first nesting record for this species (see note this issue). One 6 Jun at Cardinal M *Winneshiek* (DC) was unexpected and, other than the nesting record, was the first summer report since 1965 and the third latest.

Red-necked Grebe: All: an ad 19 Jun at Grovers L *Dickinson* (LAS), a pair 29 Jun at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD), and one there 12 Jul (SJD).

Eared Grebe: All: two pairs 4 Jun at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD), a pair there 29 Jun (SJD), and an ad there 12 Jul (SJD).

Western Grebe: All: a lingering bird at Swan L *Carroll* last reported 13 Jun (HZ) and a pair 4 Jun at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD).

Double-crested Cormorant: The only report of nesting was at the *Clinton* spoil islands where 775 ads, 931 nests, and ca 545 yg were present 25 Jun (SJD). Other reports

came from *Emmet*, *Fremont*, *Johnson*, and *Palo Alto* (MSIM, MHB).

American White Pelican: Pelicans nested again at the *Clinton* spoil islands where 1500 ads, 885 nests, and ca 575 yg were found 25 Jun (SJD). The 190 on 9 Jun at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DTh) was the high early summer count away from the breeding colony. The first reports of southbound birds were two flocks totaling 242 birds on 26 Jul near the Des Moines R south of Ledges SP (LGD). Most: 1585 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend *Fremont* (SJD).

American Bittern: All: singles 4 Jun at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD) and 12 Jul at Eagle Flats WA *Hancock* (SJD).

Least Bittern: An amazing 20 were found 4 Jul at Green Island WA *Jackson* (JF). Elsewhere, up to 6 were reported in *Clay*, *Clinton*, *Dallas*, *Louisa*, *Union*, and *Wright* (m.ob.).

Great Blue Heron: Most: 33 on 27 Jul at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), 53 on 30 Jul near Lippke Wetlands *Plymouth* (GLV), and 191 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend *Fremont* (SJD).

Great Egret: The *Clinton* spoil island colony had 465 ads and 388 nests on 25 Jun (SJD). The largest post-breeding concentration was 150 on 4 Jul at Green Island WA *Jackson* (JF).

Snowy Egret: An ad and a juv 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend *Fremont* (SJD) was the only report.

Cattle Egret: Cattle Egrets nested at the *Clinton* spoil islands for the fourth time since 2010 with 5 ads and 2 nests with eggs or yg on 25 Jun (SJD). Elsewhere 14 were at Nottleman Island Mills 14, 15 Jul (Coady Lundy *fide* SJD).

Green Heron: One or 2 were found in *Dickinson*, *Jefferson*, *Johnson*, *Marshall*, *Plymouth*, *Van Buren*, *Warren*, *Winnebago*, and *Woodbury* (m.ob., MSIM). This continues



Mississippi Kite carrying nesting material, Ottumwa, Wapello, 9 June 2014. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.

to be a low density but widely distributed species.

Black-crowned Night-Heron: All: one 14 Jul at Deer Island *Harrison* (MSIM), 2 on 27 Jul at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), and one ad 31 Jul at Cedar L Linn (JF).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: One 15 Jul at Parker's Woods *Cerro Gordo* (RGo) was the only report.

White-faced Ibis: The 10 on 23 Jun at Bluewing WPA near Burt *Kossuth* (Erich Gilbert *fide* MCK) was the only report.

ROSEATE SPOONBILL: One juv 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend *Fremont* (*SJD-ph) is Iowa's fourth record of this southern wading bird (see note this issue).

Turkey Vulture: Reports of birds roosting on communications towers included 45 on 1 Jun in Mason City *Cerro Gordo* (CJF), 150 on 24 Jul in Coralville *Johnson* (MHB), and 60 on 27 Jul near Riverside *Washington* (LGR).

Osprey: This year 20 pairs had 14 successful nest attempts and produced 27 young, similar to the 14 successful nests that produced 28 young in 2013. Starting with the first successful nest in 2003, 168

Ospreys have been produced in 92 nests in Iowa. Six young Ospreys from Minnesota were released this summer, three each at Clear L *Cerro Gordo* and Swan L *Carroll* (PSc).

Mississippi Kite: One or 2 were found in Ottumwa *Wapello* (RIA, PHA, BSc) where they nested and in Des Moines *Polk* where as many as 4 were found (JB, PJW, AB). Both seem to be established sites for the species.

Bald Eagle: Iowa's Bald Eagle population continues to grow with about 400 active territories, not all active every year. The number of counties with at least one active nest increased to 96 with the addition of Ida County (SSh).

Northern Harrier: All: 2 on 1 Jun at Spring Run WA *Dickinson* (MHB), 2 on 12 Jun at Panicum Prairie *Worth* (CJF), one 2, 29 Jul at Union Hills WPA *Cerro Gordo* (MSIM, PH), one 10 Jul at Black Hawk WA *Sac* (MSIM), and one 27 Jul at Hayden Prairie *Howard* (PH).

Cooper's Hawk: This species was probably underreported: singles 10 Jun at West Des Moines *Polk* (RIA, PHA), 13 Jun



Swainson's Hawk, Lyon, 5 June 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

at Dekalb WA *Decatur* (MSIM), and 18 Jul at Sioux City *Woodbury* (GLV).

Red-shouldered Hawk: All: one 11 Jun at Yellow River F *Allamakee* (MP), an ad and juv 16, 17 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (SJD, BSc), and 2 on 18 Jul at Tyrone WA *Monroe* (MSIM).

Broad-winged Hawk: All: one 9 Jun at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DTh), 3 on 3 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (CRE), and one 17 Jul at Lick Creek Unit *Lee* (BSc).

Swainson's Hawk: All: singles 5 Jun near George *Lyon* (SJD) and 27 Jun near Boyden *Sioux* (LAS).

KING RAIL: All: one 3 Jun at Big Wall L *Wright* (SJD) and 2 juv 13 Jul at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (*DP).

Virginia Rail: All: 11 plus a nest were at Big Wall L *Wright* 3 Jun (SJD). Elsewhere, singles were 7 Jun at Green Island *Jackson* (JLF), 3 Jul at Virgin L *Palo Alto* (MSIM), and 14, 19 Jul at Hanlontown Sl *Worth* (RGo).

Sora: Most: 5 on 9 Jul at Union Hills WPA *Cerro Gordo* (MSIM) and 8 (thought to be migrants) on 12 Jul in *Franklin* (SJD). From 1–3 were in *Clay*, *Jackson*, *Johnson*,

Palo Alto, *Winnebago*, *Woodbury*, *Worth*, and *Wright* (MSIM, JLF, MHB, GLV, RGo, SJD), mostly in the Prairie Pothole region.

Common Gallinule: More reports than usual with Green Island WA *Jackson* the hot spot with 8 on 7 Jun (JLF), 4 ads and 5 yg on 7 Jul (JF), and 5 ads and 9 yg on 23 Jul (DGE). Other reports included 3 ads and a brood 3 Jun at Big Wall L *Wright* (SJD), 2 on 23 Jun, 10 Jul at Cone M *Louisa* (LGR, RIA, PHA), and one 9 Jul at Otter Creek M *Tama* (JF).

American Coot: The epicenter for coots this summer seemed to be Eagle L *Hancock* where there were 170 on 4 Jun and 32 broods 12 Jul (SJD).

Sandhill Crane: Cranes were found in 25 counties (PSc), mostly in the eastern half of Iowa and most of which were probably nesting (PSc). A pair and a colt near L *Cornelia Wright* (Eric Rector *fide* SJD), 2 ads and a colt 23 Jun near Belle Plaine *Benton* (JF), 2 ads 4 Jul at Lower Morse L *Wright* (SJD), 2 ads 6 Jul in the Chain-O-Lakes/Wickiup Hill area *Linn* (JF, LGR), and 2 ads and 2 colts 16 Jul at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF) were from areas recently occupied by cranes. The only nesting report from W Iowa was 2 ads and 2 colts at Riverton WA *Fremont* (Amanda Smith *fide* SJD) where they have nested in the past. The most was 11 on 4 Jul at Green Island WA *Jackson* (JF).

Black-necked Stilt: After last summer's flurry of reports, one 15 Jun at Terry Trueblood RA *Johnson* (*Sharon Bauer-ph) was the only report this summer.

Black-bellied Plover: One 4 Jun at Eagle Flats WA *Hancock* (SJD) was the only report.

American Golden-Plover: One 7 Jul near Copeland Bend WA *Fremont* (Matt Dollison) was the only report.

Semipalmated Plover: Last: one 4 Jun at Terry Trueblood RA *Johnson* (MHB).

First: one 20 Jul at Lylah's M Howard (PH).
Most: 36 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Killdeer: Most: 1100 on 18 Jul at Lylah's M Howard (PH) and 306 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Spotted Sandpiper: Up to 8 were found in Fremont, Harrison, Johnson, Jones, Mills, Monona, Polk, and Story (MSIM, MHB, BSc, RLC, WO) probably represented nesting birds. The 12 on 27 Jul at Lylah's M Howard (PH) were the most.

Solitary Sandpiper: First: one 13 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB). Most: 20 on 27 Jul at Ada Hayden P Story (WO).

Greater Yellowlegs: First: 6 on 12 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF) and 3 on 12 Jul in Franklin (SJD). Most: 7 on 14 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB).

Willet: All: 3 on 12 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF), one 12 Jul in Franklin (SJD), one 12 Jul in Hancock (SJD), and 2 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Lesser Yellowlegs: First: one 4 Jul in Wright (SJD). Most: 16 on 12 Jul near Marengo Iowa (JF).

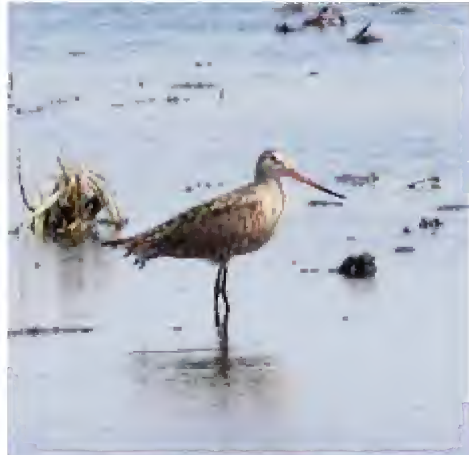
Upland Sandpiper: Up to 7 were found in Appanoose, Benton, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dallas, Fremont, Hamilton (ad and chick), Mills, Monona, Ringgold, Story, and Tama (MSIM, m.ob.) and probably were breeding birds. Most: 14 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Hudsonian Godwit: One 4 Jun near Eagle Flats WA Hancock (SJD) was the only report.

Marbled Godwit: All: one 4 Jun at Lower Morse Lake WPA Wright (SJD-ph) was the latest on record.

RUFF: One 26 Jul near Rush L Palo Alto (*LAS) was Iowa's third summer record and the first since 2006.

Stilt Sandpiper: Last: one 3 Jun at Big Wall L Wright (SJD). First: 4 on 12 Jul in



*Hudsonian Godwit, Hancock, 4 June 2014.
Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.*

Hancock (SJD). Most: 33 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Dunlin: The only records were singles 3 Jun at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB) and 3, 4 Jun at Big Wall L Wright (SJD).

Baird's Sandpiper: Three on 20 Jul at Lylah's M Howard (PH-details) was the only report.

Least Sandpiper: First: 10 on 2 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF). Most: 145 on 18 Jul at Lylah's M Howard (PH).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Last: 14 on 12 Jun at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF).

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: The only report was 45 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Pectoral Sandpiper: Last: 4 on 4 Jun near Eagle Flats WA Hancock (SJD). First: one 4 Jul near the Winnebago R Winnebago (JB). Most: 285 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Last: 3 on 5 Jun at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB) and 2 on 5 Jun at Rush L Osceola (SJD). First: 3 on 18 Jul at Lylah's M Howard (PH). Most: 208 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).



Buff-breasted Sandpipers, Frazer's Bend, Fremont, 30 July 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Last: one 3 Jun at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB). First: 5 on 12 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF) and 5 on 12 Jul in Franklin (SJD).

Wilson's Snipe: The only reports were singles 17 Jul at Harrier M Boone (MSIM) and 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD).

Wilson's Phalarope: All: 3 on 2 Jun at Saylorville Res Polk (RIA, PHA) were probably late spring migrants while the 2 on 16 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF) and 3 on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend Fremont (SJD) probably were southbound.

Red-necked Phalarope: One 30 Jul at Cardinal M Winneshiek (LR) was the only report.

Bonaparte's Gull: Singles 28 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF) and 29 Jul at Union Hills WPA Cerro Gordo (PH) were the only reports.

Laughing Gull: One ad 1 Jun at Saylorville Res Polk (*JB) was Iowa's seventh summer record; the last summer record was

in 2012. This bird was also reported on 31 May (Harms 2014).

Franklin's Gull: Late northbound birds included 47 on 3 Jun at Big Wall L Wright (SJD), 725 on 4 Jun at Spirit L Dickinson (SJD), and one 12 Jun at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF). The 124 on 29 Jul at Mud L Clay (LAS) indicated southward movement.

Ring-billed Gull: At the Spirit Lake landfill Dickinson, some 100+ adults and many nests were present 29 May but the nests were destroyed in a hailstorm 1 Jun (Jamie Vassar *fide* SJD). On 5 Jun about 200 ringbills, mostly ads but no nests were still at the landfill (SJD). On 25 Jun, 26 gulls, mostly non-adults, were on the Mississippi R near the Clinton spoil islands but no gull nesting was noted there in Iowa this year (SJD).

Herring Gull: All: one 2 Jun at Saylorville Res Polk (RIA, PHA), one first alt 22 Jun at Red Rock Res Marion (SJD), 2 first alt 25 Jun on Clinton spoil islands (SJD), an ad



Least Tern, Frazer's Bend WA, Fremont, 30 July 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

16 Jul at Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD), and an ad 30 Jul at Deere Dike *Dubuque* (DSH).

Least Tern: Reports at the usual MidAmerican Ponds *Pottawattamie* breeding site were 2 on 10 Jun and 5 on 16 Jul (RIA, PHA, DTh). Most surprising (see note this issue) was 3 ads on 9 Jul at Nottleman Island WA *Mills* (MSIM) and 3 ads and 2 nests there 30 Jul (SJD); and 12 ads, 4 juv, 4 nests, and one brood on 30 Jul at Frazer's Bend WA *Fremont* (SJD). Reports away from the breeding sites were one 1 Jun at Brushy Creek RA *Webster* (SJD) and one 19, 20 Jul and 2 on 30 Jul near Lippke Wetlands *Plymouth* (GLV).

Caspian Tern: All: one 2 Jun at Saylorville Res *Polk* (RIA, PHA), 2 on 23 Jun at Cone M *Louisa* (LGR), 3 on 26 Jun at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO), one 16 Jul on Pool 19 *Lee* (SJD), and 8 on 21 Jul at Frazer's Bend WA *Fremont* (MSIM).

Black Tern: Late migrants included 230 on 4 Jun at Spirit L *Dickinson* (SJD) and 6 on 16 Jun at Saylorville Res *Polk* (DTh). The 40, many carrying food to young, on

29 Jun at Eagle L *Hancock* (SJD) and 13 including 2 juv on 13 Jul at Dan Greene Sl *Clay* (LAS) provided evidence of nesting. Migration was underway with 2 on 12 Jul near Marengo *Iowa* (JF) and 3 on 27 Jul at Cone M *Louisa* (LGR).

Common Tern: Two on 25 Jun barely sneaked across the border into Iowa near the *Clinton* spoil islands (SJD).

Forster's Tern: All: one 22 Jun at Red Rock Res *Marion* (SJD) and 2 on 29 Jul at Trumbull L *Clay* (LAS).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: From 1–5 were found in 26 counties scattered across the state (m.ob., MSIM). There were far more reports of this species than of Black-billed Cuckoo.

Black-billed Cuckoo: The 14 reports, mostly singles, were more than in recent years and from *Cerro Gordo, Dallas, Johnson, Kossuth, Linn, Monona, Polk, Ringgold*, and *Warren* (m.ob., MSIM).

Barn Owl: The only nest reported was in *Decatur* and it fledged at least one yg. Barn Owls were reported in *Dallas, Frank-*



Black-billed Cuckoo, Hawkeye WA, Johnson, 16 July 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.



Eurasian Collared-Dove, Boone, 14 June 2014. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

lin, Keokuk, Lucas, Ringgold, Story, Tama, and Taylor and may have nested at some of those sites. The *Franklin* site was unusual because of its location north of where most reports come from and because owls nested there successfully in 2009 and 2010 (BEh).

Chuck-will's-widow: One 10 Jun near Green Hollow WA *Fremont* (RIA, PHA) was the only report.

Eastern Whip-poor-will: One 20 Jun at Waterman Prairie O'Brien (MSIM) was outside of its usual Iowa range.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: All: 2 on 5 Jun at Lansing WA *Allamakee* (MSIM), 2 on 10 Jun at Effigy Mounds NM *Allamakee* (MP), and recently fledged yg found in Dec-*orah Winneshiek* (Gene Dale fide DC).

Pileated Woodpecker: From 1–3 were found in *Allamakee, Boone, Dallas, Howard, Marshall, Mills, Polk, Washington, and Webster* (MSIM, m.ob.). The most was an apparent family group of 6 on 26 Jul at Chichaqua Greenbelt *Polk* (AB).

Peregrine Falcon: Sixteen pairs had 10 successful nests and produced 30 yg this year, similar to totals in 2013. New sites were at Bellevue SP *Jackson* and Eagle

Point P *Dubuque* (PSc). Starting in 1993, peregrines at two sites in Cedar Rapids and Des Moines have produced an amazing 63 and 53 fledglings (PSc).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Last: one 3 Jun at Ada Hayden P *Story* (WO) and one 5 Jun at Rush L *Osceola* (SJD). One 28 Jul near Sparks Cemetery *Boone* (LGD-details) was the third earliest.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Last: 2 on 1 Jun at Anderson L *Hamilton* (SJD), one 3 Jun at A.A. Call SP *Kossuth* (MCK), and one 5 Jun at Pine Lake SP *Hardin* (MP).

Acadian Flycatcher: Up to 3 were found in *Allamakee, Cedar, Dallas, Delaware, Jones, Linn, Marshall, Polk, Ringgold, and Washington* (MSIM, CRE, DCH, MP, BR, JB). Most: 9 on 11 Jun at Yellow River F *Allamakee* (MP). One 8 Jun at Algona *Kossuth* (MCK) and 2 on 21 Jun at Bertram Reservation *Clay* (LAS) were at the western fringe of its usual range.

Alder Flycatcher: There were seven June reports with one 8 Jun at Bob Hay Memorial Cons A *Webster* (MHB), 3 on 10 Jun at Cheever L *Emmet* (MSIM), and 4 on 11 Jun at Black Hawk WA *Sac* (MSIM) the latest.

Willow Flycatcher: Up to 4 were found in 26 counties scattered across Iowa (MSIM, m.ob.). The most was 12 on 2 Jun at Virgin L *Palo Alto* (MSIM).

Least Flycatcher: Last: one 5 Jun at Ocheyedan Pits *Osceola* (SJD). One 4 Jun, 4 Jul was at Lower Morse L *Wright* (SJD), the same place where one was found the two previous summers.

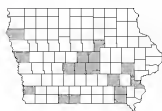
Western Kingbird: Few reports. One 24 Jul in Sioux City *Woodbury* (GLV) was the only report from its usual W Iowa range. *Polk* county reports were 2 on 3 Jun near Gray's L, Des Moines (AB), one 29 Jun at Holiday P, West Des Moines (RLC), and 3 on 10 Jul near the state capital (AB).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: All: one 19 Jul north of Council Bluffs *Pottawattamie* (Sam Manning *vide* Luther Haige). This species has been found in Iowa in summer 5 of the last 6 years.

Loggerhead Shrike: All: singles 6 Jun at Brenton Arboretum *Dallas* (JB), 12 Jun in *Cerro Gordo* (CJF), 14 Jun near Homestead *Iowa* (JF), 23 Jun at Cone M *Louisa* (LGR), 3 on 30 Jul in *Montgomery* (SJD), and 2 on 30 Jul in *Adams* (SJD). This continues to be a rare species in summer in Iowa.

White-eyed Vireo: All were from extreme SE Iowa: 2 on 11 Jun at Fox River WA *Van Buren* (MSIM), one 24 Jun–23 Jul in *Jefferson* (DCP), 2 on 3 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (CRE), 4 on 16 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (SJD), 4 on 17 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (BSc), 2 on 17 Jul at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (BSc), and one 17 Jul at Lick Creek Unit *Lee* (BSc).

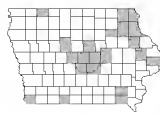
Bell's Vireo: From 1–5 were found in 14 counties mainly in Cen and S Iowa (m.ob., MSIM). Two on 9 Jul near Broken Kettle Grasslands *Plymouth* (GLV) was the only report from the northern third of Iowa.



Yellow-throated Vireo: Up to 3 were



Bell's Vireo, Anderson L, Hamilton, 1 June 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.



found in 26 counties (MSIM, m.ob.). Other than one 13 Jul at Iowa Lakeside Lab *Dickinson* (WWH), reports were largely from the southeastern half of Iowa.

Red-eyed Vireo: Up to 8 were found in 16 counties (MSIM, WWH, MHB, TMH, RLC, MHB). None were reported from NW or N-cen Iowa.

Black-billed Magpie: The 6 found 9 Jul were at their usual site near Broken Kettle Grasslands *Plymouth* (GLV).

Tufted Titmouse: Up to 9 were found in *Allamakee*, *Boone*, *Clinton*, *Decatur*, *Fremont*, *Monroe*, *Muscatine*, *Polk*, *Ringgold*, and *Sac* (MSIM, RLC).

Sedge Wren: Reports came from 24 counties scattered across the state (m.ob., MSIM). The most were 22 on 4 Jun at Prairie Gold WA *Palo Alto* (MSIM) and 21 on 13 Jun at Ocheyedan WA *Clay* (MSIM). Three reports from the southern third of Iowa were all in mid or late July: one 16 Jul at Waubonsie SP *Fremont* (DTH), 2 on 27 Jul



House Wren, Tyrone WA, Monroe, 5 June 2014. Photograph by Reid Allen, West Des Moines, IA.



Cliff Swallow, Dolliver Memorial SP, Webster, 13 July 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.

at Kellerton BCA Ringgold (DTh), and 20 on 31 Jul near Ainsworth Washington (WWH), suggestive of a southward movement late in the period.

Marsh Wren: Reports came from Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Howard, Palo Alto, Story, Winnebago, and Wright, mostly in the Prairie Pothole region of Iowa (MSIM, MHB, PH, HZ, JB). The most was 11 on 13 Jun at Ocheyedan WA Clay (MSIM).

Carolina Wren: One or 2 were found in Boone, Decatur, Hardin, Jefferson, Marshall, Polk, and Ringgold (MSIM, MP, DCP, BE).

Bewick's Wren: The only report was 2 on 16 Jul at the usual site near Argyle Lee (SJD).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Up to 6 were found in Allamakee, Black Hawk, Bremer, Clinton, Emmet, Jefferson, Johnson, Jones, Mills, Story, and Webster (MSIM, m.ob.).

Veery: All: one 5 Jun at Dows Preserve Linn (JF), one 9 Jun near Wolf Creek P Grundy (MP), one 10 Jun at Backbone SP

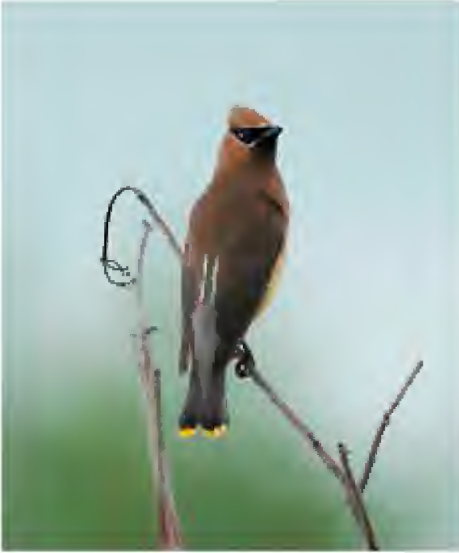
Delaware (MP), 2 on 11 Jun at Yellow River F Allamakee (MP), and one 6 Jul at Pilot Knob SP Winnebago (RGo).

Wood Thrush: From 1–3 were found in 18 counties scattered across Iowa (MSIM, m.ob.). The most was 11 on 24 Jun at Deer Island Harrison (MSIM).

Northern Mockingbird: Singles were found in Appanoose, Decatur, Montgomery, and Taylor (TNJ, JRL, SJD, RIA, PHA), all in the southern two rows of counties.

Cedar Waxwing: Waxwings were found in 21 counties scattered across all of Iowa (MSIM, RLC, WWH, MHB, DTh). Other than a flock of 60 on 1 Jun in Algona Kossuth (MCK) and 20 on 7 Jun in Baxter Jasper (WWH), nearly all reports were of 1–3 birds.

Ovenbird: Birds were found in 13 counties scattered across most of Iowa (MSIM, m.ob.). One 21 Jun at the Bertram Reservation Clay (LAS) was the only report from NW Iowa. The most was 9 on 11 Jun at Yellow River F Allamakee (MP).



Cedar Waxwing, Polk, 28 July 2014. Photograph by Richard S. Wacha, Des Moines, IA.



Common Yellowthroat, Boone, 28 July 2014. Photograph by Reid Allen, West Des Moines, IA.

Worm-eating Warbler: One 16 Jul at Donnellson Unit *Lee* (SJD) was the only report.

Louisiana Waterthrush: All: singles 5 Jun at Dows Preserve *Linn* (JF), 7 Jun at Bickett-Rate Preserve *Cedar* (CRE), and 10, 11 Jun at Yellow River F *Allamakee* (MP).

Northern Waterthrush: One 29 Jul at Greenbelt L *Black Hawk* (DGE) was record early.

Blue-winged Warbler: All: 3 on 5 Jun at Lansing WA *Allamakee* (MSIM) and 6 on 11 Jun at Yellow River F *Allamakee* (MP).

Black-and-white Warbler: All: one 10 Jun at Cheever Lake S Preserve *Emmet* (MSIM).

Prothonotary Warbler: All: 3 on 10 Jun at Effigy Mounds NM *Allamakee* (MP), one 22 Jun at South Skunk WA *Jasper* (SJD), 3 on 27 Jun at Chichaqua Greenbelt *Polk* (LGR), and one 8 Jul near Dows *Wright* (SJD).

Tennessee Warbler: The only strag-

gler was one 1 Jun at Brushy Creek RA *Webster* (SJD).

Kentucky Warbler: All: 3 on 23 Jun and one 8 Jul at Tyrone WA *Monroe* (MSIM), one 11 Jun at Yellow River F *Allamakee* (MP), 2 on 25 Jun, 21 Jul at Mt Ayr WA *Ringgold* (MSIM), one 3 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (CRE), and 2 on 17 Jul at Croton Unit *Lee* (BSc).

Hooded Warbler: All reports were from Donnellson Unit *Lee*: 2 on 11 Jun (JLF), 2 on 16 Jul (SJD), and 3 on 17 Jul (BSc).

American Redstart: Probably underreported as reports came from only 15 counties scattered across Iowa (MSIM, MP, PH, LAS, MHB). Most: 18 on 10 Jun at Backbone SP *Delaware* (MP).

Cerulean Warbler: All: 2 on 4 Jun at Hanging Rock Woods *Johnson* (JF), one 4 Jun at Hawkeye WA *Johnson* (JF), 5 on 10 Jun at Yellow River F *Allamakee* (MP), one 12 Jun at Pictured Rocks P *Jones* (BR),



Grasshopper Sparrow, Boone, 17 July 2014.
Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

2 on 14 Jun in Brinton Timber Washington (CRE), and one 14 Jun in Appanoose (TNJ).

Northern Parula: All: singles 11 Jun at Yellow River F Allamakee (MP), 3 Jul at Croton Unit Lee (CRE), and 10 Jul at Mt. Ayr WA Ringgold (MSIM).

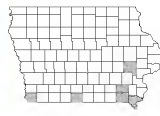
Blackburnian Warbler: A singing male 1 Jun at Brushy Creek RA Webster (SJD) was late and the first summer report since 2009.

Blackpoll Warbler: A female 2 Jun at Ada Hayden P Story (WO) was late and the first summer report since 2010.

Pine Warbler: A male and a fledgling 16 Jul at Donnellson Unit Lee (SJD) was the third report of nesting from that site since 2004.

Yellow-throated Warbler: All: one 10 Jun at Yellow River F Allamakee (MP), one 3 Jul in Donnellson Unit Lee (CRE), one 10 Jul at Mt Ayr WA Ringgold (MSIM), and 2 on 16 Jul at Donnellson Unit Lee (SJD).

Yellow-breasted Chat: All: one 11 Jun



at Belfast Rd Lee (JLF), 3 on 11 Jun at Fox River WA Van Buren (MSIM), one 13 Jun at Dekalb WA Decatur (MSIM), one 18 Jun near Fairfield Jefferson (DCP), 2 on 18 Jun and one 14 Jul in rural Jefferson (DCP), one 21 Jun at Hawkeye WA Johnson (JF), one 26 Jun at Green Hollow WA Fremont (MSIM), one 3 Jul at Donnellson Unit Lee (CRE), 2 on 3 Jul and one 16 Jul at Croton Unit Lee (CRE, SJD), 5 on 9 Jul at Fox River WA Van Buren (MSIM), and one 17 Jul at Lick Creek Unit Lee (BSc).

Eastern Towhee: Towhees were found in 21 counties scattered across most of Iowa (MSIM, CJF, MHB, BR, RLC). Two on 23 Jun at Waterman Prairie O'Brien (MSIM) was the only report from NW or N-cen Iowa. The most was 20 on 30 Jul in the Ainsworth area Washington (WWH).

Clay-colored Sparrow: All: one 1 Jun at Spring Run WA Dickinson (MHB), 2 on 2 Jun at Virgin L Palo Alto (MSIM), one 26 Jun at Freda Haffner Kettlehole Preserve Dickinson (LAS), an ad feeding a young bird 2 Jul at Pilot Knob SP Hancock (DGE), and 5 singing birds 18 Jul at Mullen WA Howard (PH).

Lark Sparrow: Up to 6 were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Fremont, Jasper, Johnson, Kossuth, Mills, Monroe, Monona, and Webster (MSIM, PH, DTh, MHB, MCK). The most was 12 on 23 Jun at Tyrone WA Monroe (MSIM).

LARK BUNTING: A male 4 Jun at Lansing Allamakee (*Tura Fisher-ph) was Iowa's first record since 2005.

Savannah Sparrow: One 20 Jul at Kellerton BCA Ringgold (MSIM) was south of its usual range.

Grasshopper Sparrow: Up to 8 were found in 20 counties scattered throughout Iowa (MSIM, m.ob.). The most were 13 on 9 Jun at St. Mary's Island WA Mills (MSIM)



Virginia Rail, Big Wall L, Wright, 4 June 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.



Green Heron, Terry Trueblood Rec Area, Johnson, 7 July 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.



Franklin's Gull, Saylorville Res, Polk, 2 June 2014. Photograph by Reid Allen, West Des Moines, IA.



Red-headed Woodpecker, Bob Hay Memorial Conservation A, Webster, 7 June 2014. Photograph by Mark Brown, Iowa City, IA.



Lark Sparrow, Hawkeye WA, Johnson, 6 June 2014. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.



Dickcissel, Grosbeak WA, Union, 16 July 2014. Photograph by Reid Allen, West Des Moines, IA.



Blue Grosbeak, Iowa City, Johnson, 27 June 2014. Photograph by Linda Rudolph, Coralville, IA.



Bobolink, Boone, 16 June 2014. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

and 20 on 27 Jul at Kellerton BCA Ringgold (DTh).

Henslow's Sparrow: Birds were found in 15 counties, mainly in the southeastern quarter of the state (m.ob., MSIM). The northernmost was one 10 Jun near Strawberry Point Clayton (MP). The most was 19 on 11 Jun at Fox River WA Van Buren (MSIM).

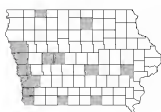
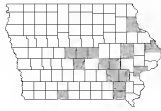
Swamp Sparrow: Birds were found in Boone, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Guthrie, Marshall, Winnebago, and Wright (MSIM, MHB), all in or near the Prairie Pot-hole region of Iowa. The most was 23 on 10 Jul at Kirchner Prairie Clay (MSIM).

White-throated Sparrow: One 2–8 Jun near Sparks Cemetery Boone (LGD) was the first summer report for this species since 2009.

Summer Tanager: One or 2 were found in Dallas, Fremont, Harrison, Lee, Monona, and Ringgold (DCH, MSIM, SJD), all in the southern half of Iowa. The northernmost report was one 13 Jul at Brushy Creek RA Webster (SJD).

Scarlet Tanager: Up to 6 were found in 14 counties (MSIM, m.ob.), mostly in the southeastern half of Iowa.

Blue Grosbeak: There were numerous reports from its usual W Iowa range (MSIM, DTh, GLV) with a maximum of 8 on 16 Jul at Louisville Bend WA Monona (MSIM). Other reports, all singles, were 14 Jun near Unionville Appanoose (M and V Stephens *fide* TNJ), 20 Jun at Kellerton BCA Ringgold (MSIM), 22 Jun at two sites in Jasper (SJD), 26 Jun at Freda Halfner Kettlehole Preserve Dickinson (LAS), carrying food 29 Jun at Lime Creek Nat Center Cerro Gordo (BVL, CJF, RGo), again there 6 Jul (BVL), an imm 3, 11 Jul



Yellow-headed Blackbird, Lower Morse Lake WPA, Wright, 4 June 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB), one 6 Jul at Grand Junction Greene (SJD), and 3 on 26 Jul near Carroll Carroll (DCH). An ad and juv 25, 30 Aug 2013 in Boone (LGD) add another indication of this species' eastward range expansion in Iowa.

Dickcissel: Commonly found throughout most of Iowa. Counts of 123 on 9 Jun at St. Mary's Island WA Mills (MSIM), 116 on 13 Jun at Copeland Bend WA Mills (MSIM), and 87 on 29 Jun in nw Polk (BE) suggest that it was very abundant in Iowa this summer.

Bobolink: Most reports were from the northern half of Iowa with 31 displaying males on 17 Jun at Plover WPA Pocahontas (SJD) the most. The 16 on 20 Jun at Kellerton WA Ringgold (MSIM) point out how it can be abundant in suitable habitat south to Iowa's southern border.

Eastern Meadowlark: The 8 on 4 Jun at Prairie Gold WA Palo Alto (MSIM) and 4 on 5 Jun at Waterman Prairie O'Brien (MSIM) point out the recent westward movement of this species into NW Iowa.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Birds were



Great-tailed Grackle, Dan Green Sl, Clay, 4 June 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

found in Buena Vista, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Guthrie, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Sac, Story, Winnebago, and Wright (SJD, MSIM, LAS, MHB, HZ, JB), all in its usual Prairie Pothole nesting range. Other reports included one 3 Jun at Otter Creek M Tama (MP), 10 nesting birds 12 Jun at Owego Wetlands Woodbury (GLV), 2 males and a female 23 Jun at Cone M Louisa (LGR), and one 7 Jul at Green Island Jackson (JF).

Great-tailed Grackle: All: a pair 3, 4

Jun at Big Wall L Wright (SJD), 2 females 4 Jun at Dan Greene Sl Clay (SJD) and one there 26 Jul (LAS), a pair 13 Jun at Criss Cove P Madison (Jim Liechty), 5 on 24 Jun at Kirchner Prairie WA Clay (MSIM), and 6 ads and 3 nests 30 Jul at Summit L Union (SJD). As noted last year, this species seems to have disappeared from some sites where it was formerly regular.

Orchard Oriole: Up to 6 were seen in Allamakee, Dallas, Fremont, Iowa, Jasper, Johnson, Mills, Muscatine, Palo Alto, Polk, Pottawattamie, Sac, Washington, Webster, and Winneshiek (m.ob., MSIM). The high counts were in the Missouri River Valley with 19 on 8 Jul at Louisville Bend WA Monona (MSIM) and 17 on 14 Jul at Deer Island Harrison (MSIM).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: This species continues to expand its Iowa range with 2 on 3 Jun at Otter Creek M Tama (MP), 2 there 14 Jun (BTo), one 5 Jun near Brooklyn Poweshiek (BEh), and one 27 Jul at Buffalo Creek WA Delaware (BSc), all new county records. These bring the total of counties with reports of this species to 25 (*vide* BSc). Counts of 14 on 15 Jul at Terry Trueblood RA Johnson (MHB) and 16 on 16 Jul at Hawkeye WA Johnson (MHB) document its increase in number in some fairly recently occupied areas.

COMMENT

I received a total of 856 reports on the IOU website and another 3700 from MSIM. I also received about 140 other reports from individuals who did not use either of those data bases, giving a total of about 4700 reports to use to compile this report. I received information from 78 individuals. Without those contributions, this report would not be possible. My sincerest thanks to all of you who report your sightings. Also, I need to recognize the continuing contributions of two people who are somewhat hidden but who are invaluable in collecting most of the observations reported here. Ann Johnson developed and maintains the website that is critical for collecting, sorting, and displaying the hundreds of reports that come in every summer. Her tireless efforts are crucial in making this report possible. Steve Dinsmore, in cooperation with Iowa DNR staff, again summarized and gave me access to the bird sightings from teams of MSIM workers. Those sightings added greatly

to this report. In addition, he ferreted out many of the sightings that otherwise I might have overlooked.

A total of 164 species are included in this report, nine more than last year's report. Another 57 species, mostly common or abundant species were reported this year but are not included in this report and two other common species, Common Nighthawk and Purple Martin, were not reported in either data base. Thus, in total, at least 223 species were found somewhere in Iowa this summer, about average for summer.

Missing this year were a number of species that have been found in a majority of recent summers but were not reported this year. These were Ruffed Grouse, American Avocet, Piping Plover, Ruddy Turnstone, Sanderling, American Woodcock, White-winged Dove, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper, and Pine Siskin. Almost certainly several of those were present this summer but simply were not found or reported.

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Horned Grebe nesting at Eagle Lake

Stephen J. Dinsmore

On 4 June 2014 I stopped at Eagle Lake in Hancock County in search of nesting waterbirds. At approximately 2:00 P.M. from the platform overlook on the west side of the lake I noticed a pair of Horned Grebes in alternate plumage. The birds were readily identified as this species on the basis of the short, black bill, black head with bright yellow-orange “ear” tufts, dark orange-red foreneck and flanks, and black back and wings. Red-necked and Eared grebes were also visible at the same time for direct comparison. The pair of Horned Grebes spent most of its time in a narrow channel of open water close to the west edge of the marsh engaged in courtship activities and disputes with several Pied-billed Grebes. Their activity centered on a particular clump of cattail and bulrush where they were associating with a low platform nest made from stems of aquatic vegetation. At least one of the birds repeatedly sat on this platform and it appeared to me that they might be in the process of laying eggs. Kevin T. Murphy and I canoed Eagle Lake on 29 June, but wind and a thunderstorm limited our access and viewing conditions were less than ideal; we did not see any Horned Grebes. On a visit on 12 July I relocated at least one adult that was tending two half-grown chicks on the open water not far from where I had found the nest in June. The young grebes had a pale gray body, a white throat and chest, and a white head with distinctive black stripes and spotting, much like a young Pied-billed Grebe except paler and grayer. The adult was actively feeding both young birds. On a final visit on 2 August I failed to locate any Horned Grebes despite good viewing conditions and the ultimate fate of this nesting attempt is unknown.

This represents the first nesting record for Horned Grebe in Iowa, and one of the southernmost for the U.S. (Stedman 2000). The closest regular breeding sites appear to be in North Dakota and possibly Minnesota. Interestingly, Eagle Lake also hosted Pied-billed, Red-necked, Horned, and Western grebes in summer 2014, all of which appeared to be attempting to nest.

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Roseate Spoonbill in Fremont County

Stephen J. Dinsmore and Coady W. Lundy

On 30 July 2014 we were conducting bird surveys at Frazer's Bend Wildlife Area in western Fremont County. At approximately 1:05 P.M. we noticed a smaller, pinkish wading bird standing with Great Egrets. The bird was immediately recognizable as a Roseate Spoonbill on the basis of its overall coloration and bill shape. The bird was an estimated 10% smaller and shorter-necked than a Great Egret. Its most distinctive feature was the spatulate bill. The bill was long (estimated at 3 times the length of the head), laterally compressed at



Figure 1. Roseate Spoonbill, Frazer's Bend WA, Fremont, 30 July 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

the tip, and two-toned with a dark base and flesh-colored tip. The facial skin was dull gray and the large eye was dark-colored. The head, neck, and upper breast were white gradually blending into bright pink on the rest of the body. In flight the wings were bright pink except that the outer webs of the outermost four primaries had dark edges that gave the wings a dark-tipped appearance. When feeding the bird would walk slowly with its bill in the water, gradually sweeping the bill from side to side. On the basis of the bill pattern, general body color, and dark color in the primaries we aged the bird as a juvenile Roseate Spoonbill. On 5 August we revisited Frazer's Bend with Kevin T. Murphy and were unable to relocate the bird; we later found a juvenile spoonbill (presumably the same individual) a short distance upriver at Copeland Bend W.A. The bird was not seen on later visits to either site.

This represents the fourth record of a juvenile Roseate Spoonbill in Iowa, and the second in Fremont County. Single juvenile birds were seen 16 August 1960 at Union Slough NWR, Kossuth Co. (Burgess 1960), 4-14 August 1997 at Waubonsie W.A., Fremont Co. (Dinsmore 1998), and 5-8 September 2012 at Saylorville Reservoir, Polk Co. (McCecil 2013).

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Ross's Gull at Red Rock Reservoir

Ann M. Johnson

On 1 December 2013 Aaron Brees was birding at Red Rock Reservoir, searching for the previously reported Little Gull. About 9:45 A.M. he made quite the discovery. His documentation tells the story.

"On the morning of December 1 I was at Red Rock to look for the previously reported Little Gull. My first stop was the Cordova boat ramp where a large number of gulls, including 200+ Bonaparte's Gulls, were loafing and feeding offshore. After about a half hour of watching the gulls flying around feeding and seeing nothing unusual, I focused on scoping distant flocks of roosting gulls.

I was carefully examining each BOGU in a string when I came to a bird that was different. At this point the bird was too distant to identify but was clearly not a BOGU and was interesting because I could not see any black in the folded primaries. After about ten minutes the bird had drifted close enough that I could see that it was entirely pale and had a very tiny bill. At that point I began to suspect that it was a Ross's Gull. After some additional time, the bird got up and flew a few big circles that brought it in a little closer and then dove and caught a small fish. During this time I was able to view a small gull, about



Figure 1. Ross's Gull at Red Rock Reservoir, Marion, 1 December 2013. Photograph by Brandon Caswell, Marion, IA.

the size of a BOGU, that appeared almost entirely white, with large dark eyes, a tiny black bill, and a long, wedge shaped tail.

At this point I was certain of the ID and began calling and texting local birders. A number of other birders quickly arrived and we all got good views as the bird sat on the water and made feeding flights. Other features observed were a faint pinkish coloration to the breast and vent and a very faint hint of a dark collar. I returned and watched the bird at the same location on December 3 and then observed it from the North Overlook at the dam on December 7."

The bird was not seen again after 7 December but in the intervening days hundreds of people from as far away as Florida descended on Marion County to see and photograph this small gull with a slight pink blush. Ross's Gull is a rare find in the Lower 48 states, but amazingly this is the third record for Red Rock Reservoir. Iowa's first record was 31 October-1 November 1993 below the Red Rock Dam and on 13-18 December 1997 another appeared at this same location. I remember it well because we were able to contact Aaron's mom in Corydon who went out to get her son out of his deer stand in time to get to Red Rock and see his life Ross's Gull. Now he has one on his personally-found list! The fourth Iowa record is from Lake Manawa, Pottawattamie Co., on 27-30 December 1997. Ross's Gull is an unexpected visitor from the far north and has been recorded in all of our surrounding states, but I often wonder how many states in the Midwest can claim four records with three at one reservoir?

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Fish Crow at Saylorville Reservoir

Stephen J. Dinsmore

On 20 May 2014 I visited the Oak Grove Beach Recreation Area of Saylorville Reservoir in Polk County. At approximately 7:15 A.M. while in the lower parking lot I unexpectedly heard a call that I recognized as that of a Fish Crow. A lone crow flew in from the south and landed on the beach, giving the distinctive nasal two-syllable "cah-ah" call several times. The bird was clearly a crow on the basis of the dark coloration, large size, the stout, pointed bill, and distinctive call. It closely resembled an American Crow, although it seemed smaller and more compact. On close examination in direct sunlight, I looked for but did not see any of the feather "ringing" on the upper back and nape that is typical of an American Crow and absent on Fish Crow. It spent its time walking along the beach and edges of the parking lot where I took many photographs.



Figure 1. Fish Crow at the Oak Grove Beach Recreation Area of Saylorville Reservoir, Polk, 20 May 2014. Photograph by Stephen J. Dinsmore, Ames, IA.

At approximately 7:32 A.M. the bird flew south towards Cherry Glen Recreation Area where it landed along the edge of the lower parking lot. I immediately drove to that site and quickly re-located the bird. It spent the next hour moving around the lower parking lot with several flights east to land in taller trees along the ridgetop by the upper parking lot. It was mostly silent during this time, but occasionally gave soft single-note nasal “cah” calls. I decided to see how it would respond to crow calls by playing recordings of both

American and Fish crows. I alternately played calls of the two species and it never exhibited any response to an American Crow call. However, when I played a Fish Crow call it would immediately take flight and fly towards me, circle overhead, and then land nearby, obviously agitated. It rarely called in response to the taped calls. On two occasions, I played a Fish Crow call as the bird was flying away, and both times it wheeled instantly and flew right over me before landing. On one occasion the bird flew high to the southeast and was chased by an American Crow; the size difference was readily apparent during this 30 second encounter. The Fish Crow was an estimated $\geq 25\%$ smaller by body size, and the wingspan was noticeably less by about the same amount. At no time during this observation did the bird give any calls other than the nasal “cah” calls, singly or doubly. I was finally able to record the bird on my cell phone as it gave single “cah” notes at intervals of several seconds.

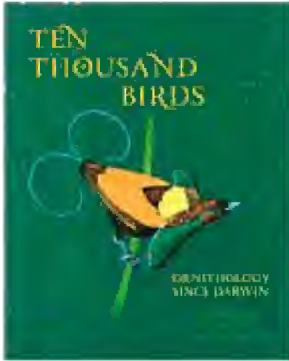
Later, when examining my photos and the literature on American and Fish crows, I realized that my flight photos might illustrate the wing formula and help confirm the bird’s identity. Sure enough, in my best photo the wing formula can be seen well. In particular, the tenth primary (p10) is very short (it looks shorter than p6), and the overall appearance of the wing is rather pointed. American Crow has a different wing formula that makes the wings appear more rounded. At 8:30 A.M. the bird took flight once again and flew off high to the south, eventually disappearing in the direction of the dam.

This represents the fourth record of a Fish Crow in Iowa, and the first since 1995. All previous records are from southeastern Iowa. This species is expanding its range northward along major river systems, so its appearance along the Des Moines River in central Iowa perhaps isn’t too surprising.

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Book Review

Tyler M. Harms



Ten Thousand Birds: Ornithology since Darwin by Tim Birkhead, Jo Wimpenny, and Bob Montgomerie. 2014. 544 pp, color photographs, halftones, Princeton University Press, Princeton, ISBN 978-0-691-15197-7, \$45.00 (hardcover).

Appealing to both birders and scientists, *Ten Thousand Birds: Ornithology since Darwin* engages the reader on a journey through the history of modern ornithology from ornithology as a young science to ornithology as it is today. The book traverses topics such as evolution and natural selection and sexual selection in birds, to name a few, and introduces the reader to prominent individuals who stud-

ied birds in the context of these topics and laid the ground work for ornithology as a science. Although I wouldn't consider it "light reading", it is certainly an appealing read for those interested in ornithology as a science.

The book consists of eleven chapters, each of which covers a major topic in the ornithological world. Each chapter introduces the topic and proceeds to identify and highlight individuals responsible for significant discoveries within that particular topic. For example, Chapter 1 fittingly starts by discussing the first "birds" ever discovered and immediately introduces John Ostrom, the medical-student-turned-paleontologist (interestingly enough, most early ornithologists studied medicine before turning to birds) responsible for the discovery of *Deinonychus antirrhopus*. This creature was a 70 kilogram, clawed bipedal runner that greatly increased scientists' understanding of how birds evolved.

From here, we transition into the ever-fascinating topics of diversification and evolution and the authors introduce none other than Sir Charles Darwin, author of the famous book *The Origin of Species*. In addition, the authors acquaint us with several others that followed in Darwin's footsteps such as David Lack, Richard Bowman, and Peter and Rosemary Grant, who visited the Galapagos Islands and continued the study of the well-known Darwin's finches. Their findings are very interesting and contributed greatly to our knowledge of how birds evolve.

Fast forward to Chapter 5 where the authors enter one of my favorite topics in ornithology, ecological adaptations for breeding. They introduce David Lack, a prominent ornithologist of the 20th Century whose interest in birds started early in life despite destined to be a doctor in the eyes of his parents. Lack's research on evolutionary adaptations and breeding biology on birds such as Common Swifts, nightjars, blackbirds, and African weaverbirds advanced our knowledge on topics such as breeding systems, breeding seasons, and clutch size. In fact, Lack was one of the first to explore why different birds produced different clutch sizes and hypothesized that clutch sizes were shaped by natural

selection that favored the greatest number of surviving offspring. He later realized that food was the critical factor, that parents laid a clutch size small enough so that they could successfully feed all hatched young. In addition, keeping the importance of food in mind, Lack hypothesized that natural selection dictated the timing and length of breeding so that young were in the nest when food was most abundant. Lack's significant contributions were the first to answer questions regarding the life histories of birds and many of his studies are still cited in ornithological research today.

Chapter 6 discusses form and function and introduces the study of anatomy to ornithology by first talking about the evolution of duck reproductive organs. As I'm sure most of you are already aware, male ducks have interesting reproductive organs that are quite different from most other bird species. Without providing too many details, early research found that the size and shape of such organs have evolved to match a female's organs of the same species. The authors then progress into bird sense, annual cycles, and circadian rhythms, all of which are fascinating topics that increase our understanding of lives of birds.

The authors then move through areas of study including bird instinct, behavioral adaptation, sexual selection, and population biology before eloquently concluding with chapter 11, "Tomorrow's Birds". Walking us through the history of bird extinctions and exploitations from plume hunting to doomed surplus (e.g., the Passenger Pigeon story) and the negative effects of DDT, the authors discuss what we, as ornithologists, have learned from these devastating situations and how we are applying what we learned to conserve bird populations today. They discuss the critical role of scientific research in bird conservation and the extraordinary contribution of citizen ornithologists to the monitoring of bird populations through the North American Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) and many other national and international bird atlases. They conclude by emphasizing the importance of knowledge of bird biology to conservation today so that we and many others can continue to enjoy birds tomorrow.

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Fifty Years Ago in *Iowa Bird Life*

James J. Dinsmore

Several articles on raptors were featured in the December 1964 issue of *Iowa Bird Life*. The lead article by Woodward Brown discussed recent population trends of Red-tailed and Red-shouldered hawks. Brown considered Christmas Bird Count data and contacted numerous observers around the state. In general he found that Red-tailed Hawks were fairly common throughout Iowa and that the number found on Christmas Bird Counts had increased in recent years. In contrast, Red-shouldered Hawks were generally considered scarce in Iowa with few reports from western Iowa. Counts of Red-shouldered Hawks on CBCs showed a steady decline.

In another article, Dean Roosa discussed the nests of three species of raptors that he found in Wright County in 1964. He found 15 Red-tailed Hawk nests, seven Great Horned Owl nests, and three Swainson's Hawk nests and provided information on nest location, productivity, and other data for each species. The Swainson's Hawk nests were the most surprising as they were somewhat east of its usual range.

Longtime IOU member J. Harold Ennis described an August trip that he and Fred Kent made to the Eldon Bryant farm near Akron in Plymouth County. There they saw several Blue Grosbeaks, found four Say's Phoebes, and found a family group of five Burrowing Owls. Bryant was long known for his knowledge of those western Iowa species, two of which now seem to be gone from Iowa.

The fall meeting was held on 13 and 14 September at Bellevue State Park in Jackson County. Being distant from any large town, the meeting had a modest attendance of 57 registrants, including a youthful Ann Moore, who enjoyed a program about pesticides, a topic then beginning to receive increased attention. The bird list totaled 85 species.

The field reports section continued to prosper with numerous reports. Some of the more interesting ones were a late Yellow-crowned Night-Heron near Des Moines, a White-faced Ibis at Goose Lake, and ten Eastern Whip-poor-wills banded at Davenport. The remains of a Burrowing Owl were found in Fremont County by Jim Rising, a speaker at an IOU meeting a few years ago. I noted that although only 16 individuals are listed as contributors; five who are still alive went on to long careers in education or conservation.

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Sedge Wren, Boone, 30 July 2014. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS OF THE IOWA ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION: Spring: 16–18 May 2014, Bellevue, Nebraska (joint meeting with Nebraska Ornithologists' Union).

FRONT COVER PHOTO: Killdeer chick, Harrier M, Boone, 17 July 2014. Photograph by Larry Dau, Boone, IA.

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